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Average payer may save on income tax

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Beginning one day after Christmas, the first of more than 87 million American households will receive the annual package of holiday greetings from Uncle Sam — 1979 federal income tax returns.

The Internal Revenue Service — which hopes to have all the packets delivered by Jan. 4 — says there are several changes in the 1979 forms that were prompted by congressional action.

Many of the alterations will save taxpayers money, the IRS claims. Other changes may mean higher tax payments.

Whether you become a 1979 winner or loser depends on your income level, your deductions, your benefits and other factors.

"Generally, the average American will pay less taxes in 1979 than he did on the same income in 1978," said one IRS spokesman, "because the tax tables have been broadened."

There are about two dozen changes in the 1979 tax laws that could influence the amount of money to be paid, including these:

— Tax rate schedules have been widened, reducing taxes in several income brackets. Filing levels have been raised.

— The "zero bracket amount" — or standard deduction — is increased.

— The deduction for personal exemptions has been increased from \$750 in 1978 to \$1,000 this year. This increase also applies to the extra exemptions for age and blindness.

— The \$35 general tax credit has expired, but will be more than made up by the higher exemption.

— State or local gasoline taxes are no longer deductible.

— Itemized deductions for political contributions have been abolished, but the limit for a tax credit for such contributions has been doubled.

— Recipients of unemployment compensation may be required for the first time to include all or part of such benefits in gross income.

— Credit for child care payments will be allowable when paid to relatives, including a grandparent, unless the relative is a dependent.

The IRS says broadening the tax rate schedules — the bottom lines on tax liability — will be beneficial.

For example:
A married couple filing a joint return showing a taxable income of \$25,000 in 1978 would have a tax of \$4,956 before any tax credits. On the same taxable income in 1979, the couple's tax before any credits would be \$4,633 — a \$323 savings.

The "zero bracket amount" — the level on which no tax is imposed — has been increased by either \$100 or \$200, depending on marital status.

For instance, the zero bracket amount for married taxpayers filing a joint return will be \$3,400 this year compared with \$3,200 in 1978.

The new zero bracket amounts also apply to the floor under itemized

deductions — another beneficial change.

Because of the widening of the tax schedules and the increased standard deduction, gross income levels at which individuals must file returns

have been increased.
For a married couple filing jointly, the new level is \$5,400 compared with \$4,700 last year. For a single person, the new rate is \$3,300 compared with \$2,950.

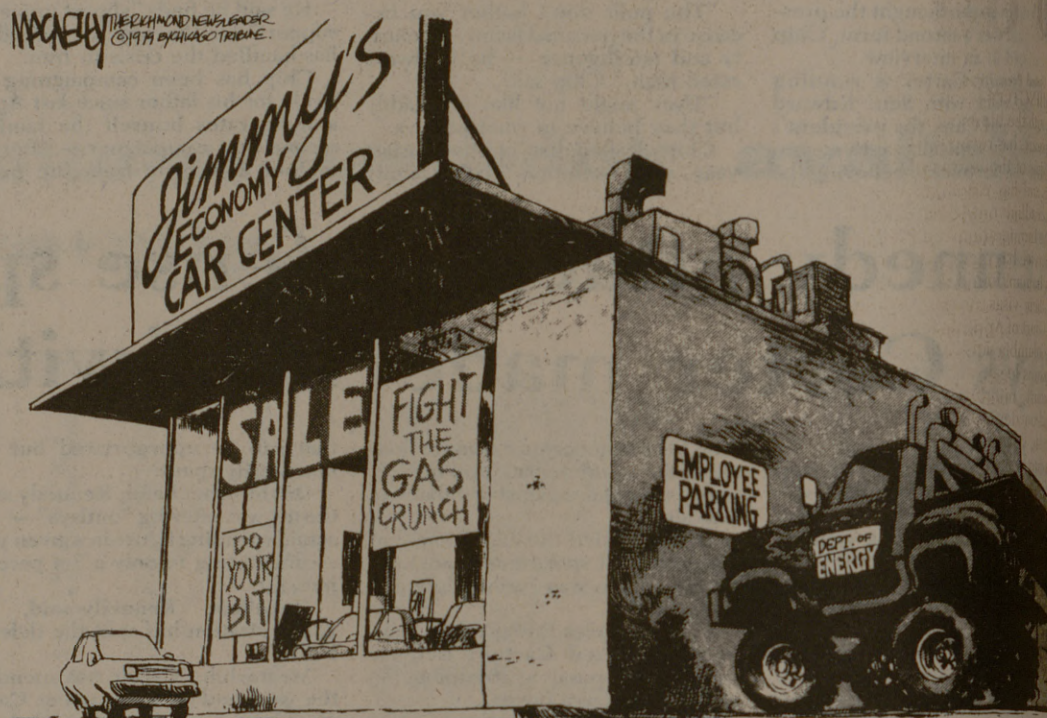
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Federal government has energy problems of its own, agency says

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The federal government has made little progress in curbing its own energy use, although policy-makers have repeatedly called on private citizens and businesses to conserve, a congressional watchdog agency says.

"The federal government is not making a sufficient commitment to curbing its energy use," concluded a General Accounting Office study Friday. "Its program to conserve energy is in disarray."

The federal government is the

largest single energy user in America.

The study found federal consumption of gasoline has increased 18 percent since 1974 while government use of coal, the country's most abundant energy resource, fell 27 percent.

The GAO study faulted the president for setting "too modest" conservation goals and said the Energy Department has failed to provide leadership on the matter.

"Although the Congress and the president have enacted and issued

legislative and executive orders, the DOE has not developed a comprehensive and aggressive energy conservation management program," the report said.

GAO called on Congress to place greater emphasis on energy conservation, and President Carter to order aggressive savings by his agencies.

The government, which consumes 10 percent of the nation's energy, could be saving the equivalent of 8,000 barrels of oil a day for every 1 percent reduction in its consumption, the report said.

Annual federal energy consumption — the equivalent of 282 million barrels of oil — costs \$4 billion, of which 45 percent is used in buildings and the rest for transportation.

The report said a 1976 presidential order requires a 10-year conservation plan on each federal building and calls on the Energy Department to assist each agency in meeting conservation goals.

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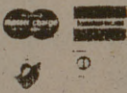
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WEDNESDAY EVENING SPECIAL

Chicken Fried Steak w/cream Gravy Whipped Potatoes and Choice of one other Vegetable Roll or Corn Bread and Butter Coffee or Tea



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